

## **CHAPTER 1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION**

### **1.1 PROJECT LOCATION**

The Tuskegee Airmen are African Americans who completed Air Corps training and were commissioned as pilots and officers during World War II. The primary flight training facility for these pilots was located at a site in Tuskegee, Alabama known as Moton Field. The military accomplishments of the Tuskegee Airmen, as well as their initial training at Moton Field, are nationally significant since this was the first time the United States Army recruited African Americans into the Army Air Corps (NPS Southeast Regional Office 1998). Historically, Moton Field comprised approximately 780 acres. The National Park Service (NPS) owns approximately 44 acres of the Moton Field site, and another 46 acres are to be added in a future expansion per the enabling legislation [Section 303 (b)(2)]. The 90-acre site is the subject of this study and is referred to as the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site (TUIA).

TUIA is located in Macon County, Alabama, approximately 2 miles north of the city of Tuskegee and the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site. Interstate 85, which passes within approximately 1 mile to the north of the site, provides major vehicular access between Montgomery, Alabama, to the west and Atlanta, Georgia, to the northeast (Figure 1-1). The site is bound by the Uphapee Creek to the east, Highway 81 to the west, Highway 199 to the south, and Moton Field Municipal Airport to the north. Figure 1-2 depicts the TUIA and Moton Field boundaries.

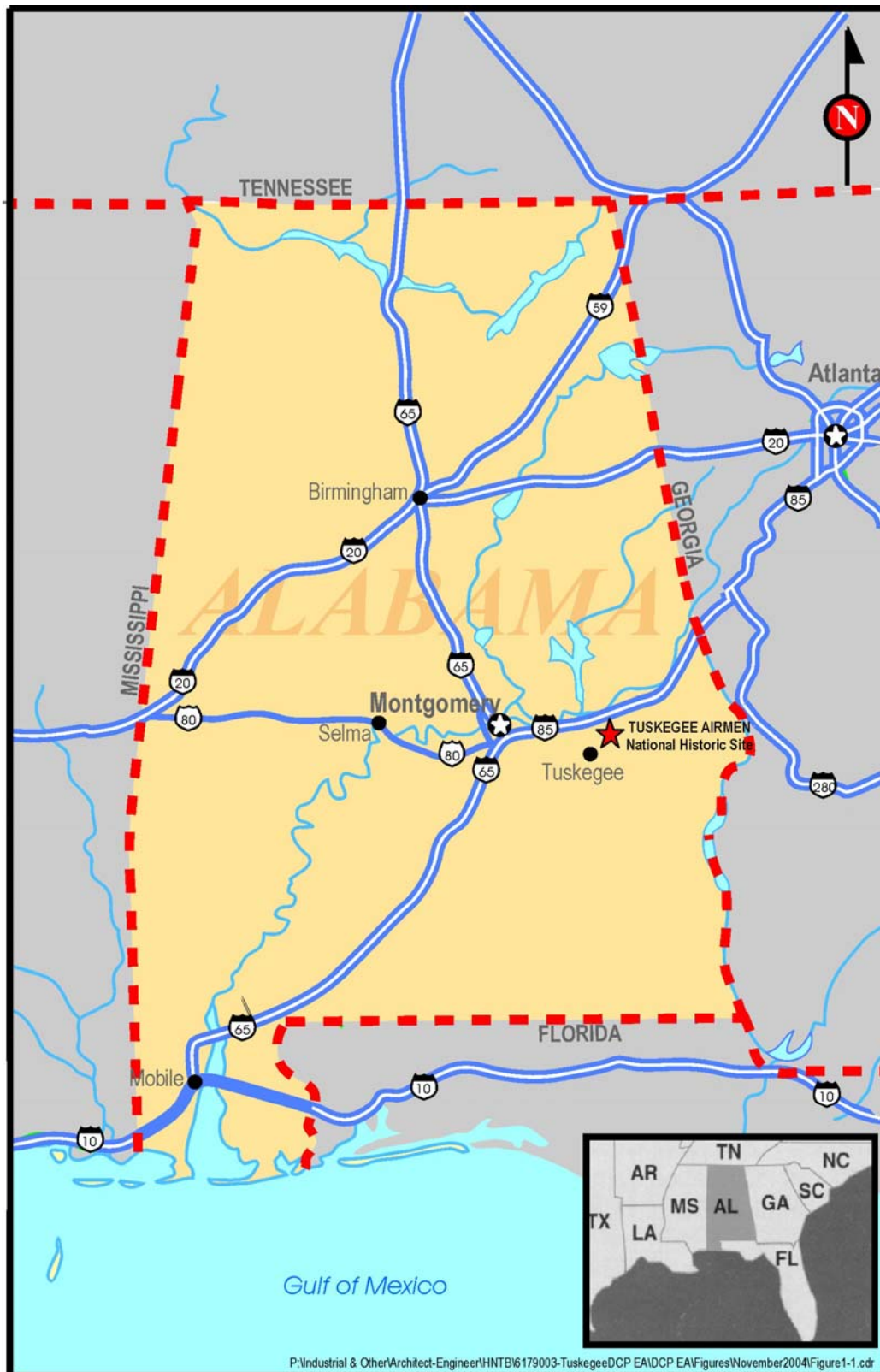
### **1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND**

When the Civilian Pilot Training Act was passed in 1939, it gave African-Americans an opportunity to learn to fly at government expense and led to the establishment of Civil Pilot Training (CPT) programs at several black colleges in the US. The Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama was one of the colleges selected to start a CPT program. Consequently, it became a great influence on the future of African-American aviation. The students of the CPT program in Tuskegee initially traveled to an airfield in Montgomery, as a local airfield was not available (Jakeman 1992).

In 1941, the Army Air Corps requested that Tuskegee Institute contract with the U.S. Army to build a new airfield and establish a primary flying school for African-American aviation cadets.

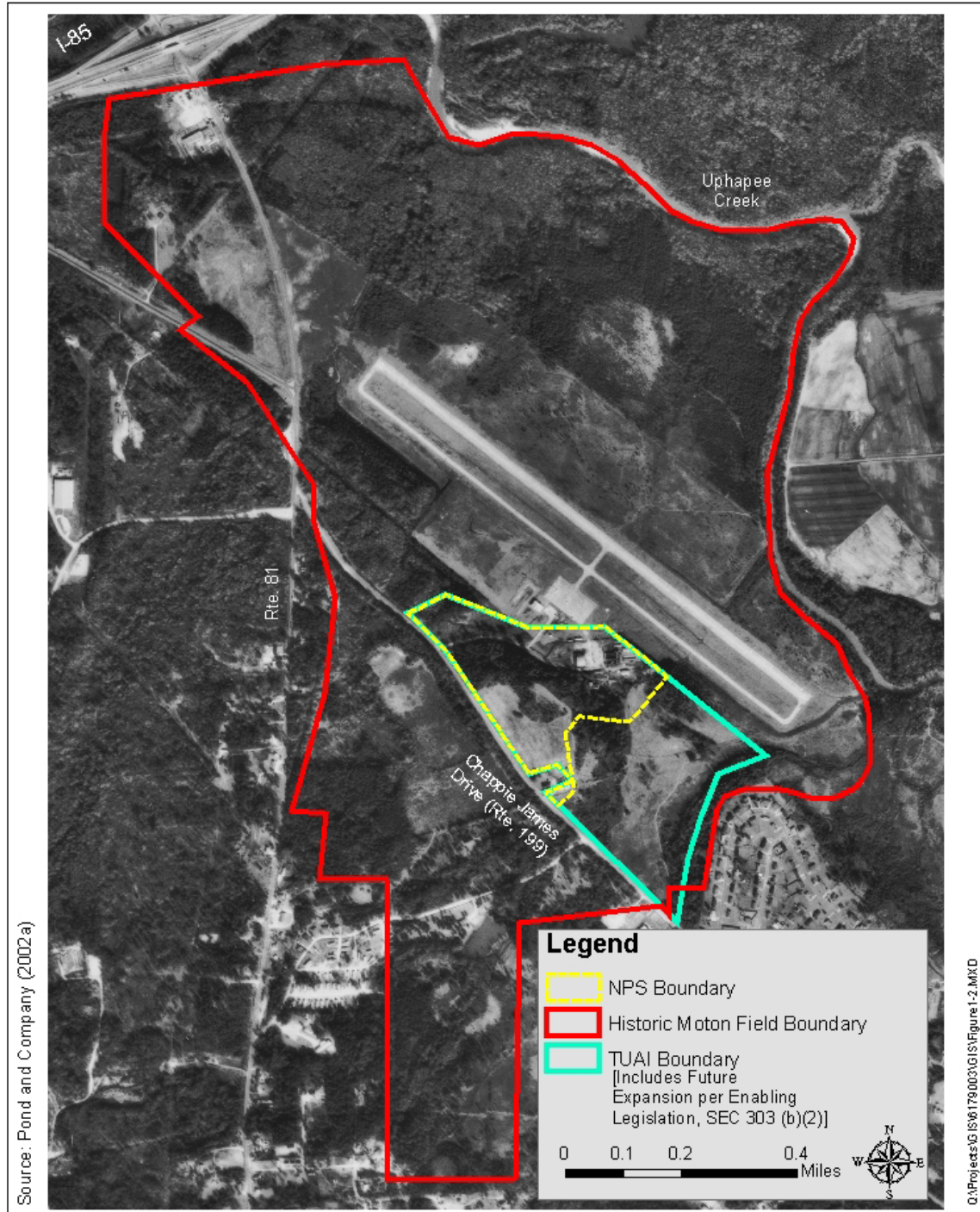
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**FIGURE 1-1: General Location Map of TUA**



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**FIGURE 1-2: TUI and Moton Field Boundaries**



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Moton Field was selected for a permanent airfield to house the cadets and aircraft. The first class of African-American aviation cadets arrived in July of 1941. By 1942, Tuskegee, Alabama became known as the center of African-American military flight training (Jakeman 1992).

The period of significance for the interpretation of TUAJ has been established as 1941 to 1945, which is the period when Moton Field was constructed and the Tuskegee Airmen were trained by the contract primary flying school. The date by which all the buildings and site features at the airfield that were associated with the flying school had been constructed is 1945 (Pond & Company 2002b). After World War II, the flight training program was terminated and the buildings were either abandoned or put to other uses. In 1989, one of the hangars burned.

In 1998, the NPS conducted a *Special Resource Study* of Moton Field that made recommendations for preservation, reconstruction, and rehabilitation. On November 6, 1998, Public Law 105-355 established TUAJ as a unit of the NPS. The enabling legislation describes the roles of NPS and its partners, Tuskegee University and the Tuskegee Airmen, in the development of TUAJ [see Public Law 105-355, § 303(d)]. A copy of the enabling legislation can be found in Appendix A. The legislation also describes the purposes for the site:

- To inspire present and future generations to strive for excellence by understanding and appreciating the heroic legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen.
- To commemorate and interpret the impact of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II, including their training at Moton Field and other sites, the African-American struggle for greater participation in the United States Armed Forces, and the impacts of the Tuskegee Airmen on civil rights advances, beginning with their success in leading the desegregation of the United States Armed forces shortly after the second World War.
- To recognize the strategic role of Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) in training the airmen and commemorating them at this historic site.

The enabling legislation provides information on how the unit will be managed, developed, and operated. Typically, enabling legislation provides generic information and a wide framework in which to fit alternatives. By contrast, the enabling legislation for TUAJ provides very specific direction for the development of TUAJ. Mandates to implement Alternatives C and D as described in the *Special Resource Study* [NPS Southeast Regional Office 1998; see Public Law 105-355, § 303(d)(4)] were included in the legislation. Initially, Alternative C will serve to guide development. Implementation of Alternative D will be followed after an agreement is reached with Tuskegee University on the development of the Tuskegee Airmen National Center.



This environmental assessment addresses development in accordance with Alternative C and does not address provisions for Alternative D.

*Alternative C – Living History Tuskegee Airmen* “envisions a unit of the National Park [Service] system with a rehabilitated cultural landscape including the historic complex and broad historic setting” (NPS Southeast regional Office 1998). Alternative C is designed to promote a strong “stepping back into time” experience including a focus on the flight training experience. To achieve this, Alternative C includes several broad categories of action. The following features are required by legislation to be in alternatives considered for the development of TUAL:

- Rehabilitate the cultural landscape, to include opportunities for exhibits and interpretation of the Tuskegee Airmen experience; rehabilitate the entrance gate and reconstruct the Guard Booth; provide pedestrian walks, parking, overlook with a Tuskegee Airmen memorial and Chief Anderson statue, and a picnic area.
- Preserve and rehabilitate Hangar Number One.
- Construct a new building on the site of Hangar Number Two.
- Rehabilitate the existing Control Tower, Skyway Club, Bath and Locker House, and the Warehouse/Vehicle Storage Building.
- Stabilize the Fire Protection Shed, Oil Storage Shed, and Dope Storage Shed.
- Provide “ghost” frameworks on the sites of the Flight Commander’s Office, Army Supply Building, Vehicle Maintenance Shed, and Physical Plant Building.

In 2002, a *Features Inventory*, a *Cultural Landscape Report*, and a *Historic Structures Report* (Pond & Company 2002a, 2002b) were completed. In 2003, NPS contracted with Hartrampf, Inc. to provide conceptual design options for the preservation and rehabilitation of the historic buildings and grounds and development alternatives for TUAL. These designs were based on Alternative C of the *Special Resource Study* (NPS Southeast regional Office 1998), the enabling legislation, and coordination with NPS personnel and interested parties, Tuskegee University, and the Tuskegee Airmen. The *Value Analysis Study* (Hartrampf 2004a) of the *Title I Conceptual Design* (Hartrampf 2003) identified the Preferred Alternative and the *100 Percent Design Analysis* (Hartrampf 2004b) further refined the Preferred Alternative.



### **1.3 HISTORY OF THE TUSKEGEE AIRMAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**

Moton Field was the only primary flight facility for African-American pilot candidates in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and, as a result, symbolized the entrance of African Americans into the Army Air Corps on a segregated basis (NPS Southeast Regional Office 1998). Moton Field was named for Robert Russa Moton, second president of Tuskegee Institute, and was built between 1940 and 1942. Civil rights organizations and the black press exerted pressures that resulted in the formation of an all African-American pursuit squadron based at Moton Field in Tuskegee, Alabama. These men later became known as the “Tuskegee Airmen,” which refers to all who were involved in the Army Air Corps program to train African Americans to fly and maintain combat aircraft. The Tuskegee Airmen included pilots, navigators, bombardiers, maintenance and support staff, instructors, and all the personnel who kept the planes in the air (NPS 2004b).

The military selected Tuskegee Institute to train pilots because of its aeronautical training commitment, the facilities it had to offer, the engineering and technical instructors, and the temperate climate required for year-round flying. The Tuskegee Airmen overcame segregation and prejudice to become one of the most highly respected fighter groups of World War II. The airmen gained particular notoriety from the sophisticated feats of the fighter pilots of the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron and the 332<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Group. The Tuskegee Airmen’s achievements led the way for the integration of the U.S. military. On November 6, 1998, President Clinton approved Public Law 105-355, establishing TUI to commemorate and interpret the heroic actions of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. Moton Field originally included 780 acres; however, the commemorative site known as TUI is a 90-acre parcel within the original Moton Field.

### **1.4 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION**

This Environmental Assessment (EA) serves as the basis for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) under NPS regulations. The EA addresses the potential impacts of the proposed action to preserve and rehabilitate TUI. The proposed action is based on Alternative C of the *Special Resource Study* (NPS Southeast Regional Office 1998) as required by the enabling legislation. The proposed action includes the rehabilitation of the Historic Core Area (HCA), which includes buildings and grounds, to reflect their 1945 appearance. This would be accomplished through the rehabilitation of several existing buildings, including Hangar Number One, the construction of a new building on the site of Hangar Number Two, the rehabilitation of the current vegetation at the site, the rehabilitation of a pond beside the Skyway Club, and the creation of green space in the HCA. Other improvements outside the

HCA would include an NPS Visitor Services Area with restrooms, a contact area, audio/video presentation area, concession areas/gift shops, and a waiting area or shelter. The site would also include a memorial or plaza with information displayed on panels and/or exhibits, a scenic overlook, pedestrian circulation paths, and a picnic area.

## **1.5 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION**

The purpose of TUAJ is to commemorate the valuable contribution of the Tuskegee Airman to the World War II effort. This purpose includes memorializing initial training at the historic Moton Field by preserving and rehabilitating the HCA and its broad historic setting. The proposed action is to develop buildings and grounds to reflect the appearance of the site during the period of significance, focusing on the year 1945. Additionally, the proposed action provides for visitor services to accommodate the projected visitor load and composition.

TUAJ has a high degree of integrity as a historic resource when both the overall airfield site and the remaining historic structures are considered. Few changes to the historic scene have occurred since the site was first developed in the 1940s. The remaining buildings and structures along with the surrounding landscape allow TUAJ to retain its visual and historic character as an airfield. Although nearly all of these remaining structures are in danger of being destroyed through deterioration, the site has a high potential for preservation and future visitor use (NPS Southeast Regional Office 1998).

## **1.6 RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS**

The following planning and environmental documents were used to develop alternatives and complete this EA.

### **1.6.1 Special Resource Study**

The *Special Resource Study* (SRS) (NPS Southeast Regional Office 1998) was completed in October 1998 to evaluate the feasibility of the Moton Field site as an addition to the National Park Service system to commemorate the role of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. This study was used to determine whether existing resources had national significance and to evaluate the degree of existing protection. The SRS was prepared by NPS with cooperating Federal, State, and local agencies and included public input and review.

### **1.6.2 Archaeological Investigation**

The *Archaeological Investigation of Moton Field* [Southern Research Historic Preservation Consultants (SRHPC) 2002] was completed in June 2002 to support Phase II of the Moton Field Preservation/Restoration project. The purpose of the archaeological survey was to determine the precise locations of the sites and physical remains of non-existing buildings and obscured landscape/site elements within TUAJ.

### **1.6.3 Cultural Landscape Report**

The *Cultural Landscape Report* (CLR) (Pond & Company 2002a) was completed in September 2002 as part of Phase II of the Moton Field Preservation/Restoration project, and provided information and recommendations for the NPS to use in the future development of TUAJ. The CLR included a comprehensive site history, a description of existing conditions, an analysis and evaluation, and treatment recommendations that follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

### **1.6.4 Historic Structures Report**

The *Historic Structures Report* (HSR) (Pond & Company 2002b) was completed in September 2002 as part of Phase II of the Moton Field Preservation/Restoration project. The HSR includes 15 Historic Structure Reports for nine extant structures and six non-existing structures. Each HSR contains an abbreviated historic context that focuses on building history, treatment recommendations and alternatives for the preservation and restoration, and archival documents, photographs, and architectural drawings of each structure.

### **1.6.5 Conceptual Design Plans of TUAJ**

Schematic development options for the historic buildings and the balance of the 44-acre site were prepared by Hartrampf for NPS. The *Conceptual Design* (95 percent submittal) was completed in November 2003, and the options were developed within the framework of the NPS's *Special Resource Study* for the site (Hartrampf 2003). The options presented in the conceptual design plans were used as the framework for developing alternatives for this EA.

### **1.6.6 Value Analysis Study**

The *Value Analysis Study* (VAS) was completed in January 2004 and presents the recommendations for the preservation and rehabilitation of the HCA buildings and grounds and construction of visitor facilities at TUAJ. The Interdisciplinary Team (IDT), which included more than 45 people from NPS and stakeholding organizations, was responsible for the value analysis process and alternatives development. The VAS was conducted to assure that all viable project alternatives were considered, evaluation factors were sound, solutions were cost effective, an independent opinion was provided, and all project objectives were satisfied by the chosen alternative (Hartrampf 2004a). The Preferred Alternative is a combination of elements from each of the options evaluated in the VAS. As required by the enabling legislation, the elements are derived from Alternative C of the SRS.

### **1.0.0 100 Percent Design Analysis**

The 100 Percent Design Analysis, completed in August 2004, presents detailed plans and expands on the alternatives development process and value analysis recommendations (Hartrampf 2004b). The design drawings present detailed plans for the proposed site layout, including grading and drainage improvements, landscaping, and architectural floor plans for each historic structure.

## **1.7 OTHER PROJECTS AND PLANS**

### **Local Projects Completed**

Moton Field Municipal Airport – The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved an Airport Improvement Plan grant for \$100,000 for Moton Field Municipal Airport that was recently used to install navigational aids, prepare environmental studies, and to complete an update to the Airport Master Plan Study (FAA 2003).

### **Future Local Projects**

Tuskegee University – The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded a \$14 million grant to Tuskegee University to complete the Tuskegee University National Center for Bioethics in Research and Health Care. The facility is projected to be completed by the Fall of 2004. The former hospital on campus will be transformed into a modern research and teaching facility for students, faculty, researchers, and visiting scholars.

Transportation – The Alabama Department of Transportation (DOT) is considering I-85 improvements in the vicinity of TUAJ that would involve a new access route to the National Historic Site. Options under consideration are an interchange to County Road 65, an interchange to Hospital Road, and improving the existing interchange at State Route (SR) 81 to allow traffic flow directly to TUAJ. Improvements to I-85 in the area of TUAJ have not been included in the 3-year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) or the Five-Year Plan.

Moton Field Municipal Airport – A proposal for runway improvements at Moton Field Municipal Airport, which includes extending the runway from 5,000 feet to 6,500 feet, has been submitted to and approved by FAA and the Alabama DOT Aeronautics Bureau; however, no funds have been allocated.

Tuskegee Airmen National Center (TANC) – The Tuskegee University has proposed to build a TANC that would be located at TUAJ close to the principal welcome and orientation areas and the Tuskegee Airmen Memorial (Alternative D in the *Special Resource Study*). The TANC would include a full-scale military museum, major exhibits with military aircraft and equipment from TUAJ's period of significance, audiovisual presentation and interactive exhibits and programs, and would eventually contain visitor contact information and orientation for the entire site, a Tuskegee Airmen Memorial, as well as a statue of "Chief" Anderson. The Tuskegee University's Charles Alfred Anderson Department of Aviation Science would also be located in this center (Hartrampf 2004a).

## **Regional Projects and Plans Completed**

### ***Recreation Areas***

Regional recreation and tourism areas include four national forests operated by the U.S. Forest Service and eight NPS facilities. The Alabama National Forest system is comprised of the William B. Bankhead, Conecuh, Talladega, and Tuskegee national forests. These four national forests have more than 660,000 acres, and account for 28 percent of the available land for public recreation in Alabama. The national forests in Alabama are managed by the U.S. Forest Service for multiple uses, including hunting, wildlife management, forestry, and recreation. The U.S. Forest Service recently completed a *Revised Land and Resource Management Plan* in January 2004 that describes management tools to achieve future desired conditions for all of Alabama's national forests (U.S. Forest Service 2004b).

Aside from TUAJ, the NPS manages the following units in Alabama:

- Horseshoe Bend National Military Park – along the Tallapoosa River in Daviston, Alabama
- Little River Canyon National Preserve – Fort Payne, Alabama
- Natchez Trace Parkway and National Scenic Trail – running through Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee
- Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail – running through Montgomery, Lowndes, and Dallas counties in Alabama
- Trail of Tears National Historic Trail – running through Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee
- Russell Cave National Monument – Bridgeport, Alabama
- Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site (NHS) – Tuskegee, Alabama

The closest recreation areas to TUAJ that are managed by the NPS are the Tuskegee Institute NHS and Horseshoe Bend National Military Park. The Tuskegee National Forest, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, is located approximately 1.5 miles to the east/southeast of TUAJ.

### ***Transportation***

The Alabama Statewide Airport System Plan is a component of the first phase of a comprehensive study being conducted by Alabama DOT Aeronautics Bureau. The second phase of planning will involve development of capital improvement plans (CIPs) to prioritize improvements needed at each airport in Alabama, including Moton Field Municipal Airport. The city of Tuskegee received a \$5,556 grant from Alabama DOT in fiscal year (FY) 2003, as part of a \$1.5 million distribution over 44 airports statewide (Alabama DOT Aeronautics Bureau 2003).

### **Future Regional Projects**

Alabama DOT recently updated the 2003-2006 STIP and the Five-Year Plan (2003-2008), which contain projects scheduled for the next three to five years. Macon County has numerous transportation improvements scheduled, but most of these projects are within urban areas of the county and none affect TUAJ.

## **1.8 DECISIONS TO BE MADE**

This EA is a decision-making document that includes a discussion of the existing resources and the resources that may be affected by the described alternatives. Federal, state, and local agency coordination, and public scoping and review are included in this document to support the decision-making process.

## **1.9 SCOPING AND ISSUES**

### **1.9.1 Public Scoping**

Public scoping is an early and open process to solicit public concerns and comments relating to a proposed action. The NPS's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines contained in *Director's Order #12 and Handbook: Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision Making* (NPS 2001a) require scoping on all environmental assessments prepared by NPS.

Although an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not expected to be needed, the park conducted public scoping on the TUAJ project to provide an opportunity for input from interested stakeholders. A scoping brochure was distributed to more than 400 individuals and organizations. A copy of the brochure and press release are included in Appendix B. The park also held a public scoping workshop in March 2004 in Tuskegee. Copies of the comments and a list of attendees are in the park's administrative file. The comments generally support the development of TUAJ and encourage NPS to implement the proposed development as soon as possible.

### **1.9.2 Impact Topics Considered**

Impact topics are the resources of concern that could be affected by the range of alternatives and are the focus in the evaluation of the potential environmental consequences of the alternatives. Potential impact topics were identified based on legislative requirements, executive orders, topics in *Director's Order #12 and Handbook* (NPS 2001a), *Management Policies 2001* (NPS 2001b), guidance from the National Park Service, input from other agencies, public concerns, and resource information specific to TUAJ. These topics include resources in the natural, cultural, and community environment.



The impact topics originally considered for the TUIAI project are presented in Table 1-1 and include vegetation; wildlife; wetlands; floodplains; ecologically critical areas; rare, threatened, and endangered species; air quality; water quality; soils and geology; noise; socioeconomic characteristics; cultural, historic, and archaeological resources; hazardous materials; and visitor experience and park operations. The table includes key regulations or policies for each impact topic. Based on site-specific conditions, impact topics either were retained for detailed analysis or eliminated from further consideration. The rationales for these actions are provided in the following sections.

**Table 1-1: Impact Topics for the TUIAI Project**

<b>Impact Topic</b>	<b>Relevant Regulations or Policies</b>
<b>Evaluated in the Environmental Assessment</b>	
Soils and Geology	Management Policies 2001
Water Quality	Clean Water Act/Executive Order 12088; Management Policies 2001
Floodplains	Management Policies 2001; Executive Order 11988; Director's Order #77-2
Air Quality	Clean Air Act; Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990; Management Policies 2001
Vegetation and Wildlife	Management Policies 2001; Migratory Bird Treaty Act; Executive Order 13112
Wetlands	Executive Order 11990; Management Policies 2001; Clean Water Act/Executive Order 12088; Director's Order #77-1
Ecologically Critical Areas	Endangered Species Act of 1973
Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species	Endangered Species Act of 1973; Management Policies 2001
Socioeconomics (demographics, economy, land use, environmental justice, recreation, and aesthetic resources)	Executive Order 12898
Noise	Management Policies 2001; Director's Order #47
Energy Requirements and Conservation	Management Policies 2001; Executive Order 13123; Executive Order 13031; Executive Order 13149
Cultural, Historic, and Archaeological Resources	Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; 36 <i>Code of Federal Regulations</i> 800; National Environmental Policy Act; Director's Order #28; Management Policies 2001
Hazardous Materials	Management Policies 2001

<b>Impact Topic</b>	<b>Relevant Regulations or Policies</b>
Visitor Experience and Park Operations	NPS Organic Act of 1916; Management Policies 2001
<b>Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Evaluation</b>	
Unique Natural Resources	
Wild and Scenic Rivers	Wild and Scenic Rivers Act; Management Policies 2001
Prime and Unique Agricultural Lands	NEPA 45 FR 59189; Council on Environmental Quality (1980) Memorandum on Prime and Unique Farmlands
Natural or Depletable Resources	Management Policies 2001
Public Health and Safety	Architectural Barriers Act of 1968; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Director's Order #83
Land Use Plans, Policies, or Controls	Tuskegee 2010 Comprehensive Plan
Indian Sacred Sites and Indian Trust Resources	Department of the Interior Secretarial Order No. 3206; Secretarial Order No. 3175; Management Policies 2001; Executive Order 13007

### **1.9.3 Impact Topics Evaluated in Detail**

The following impact topics have the potential to be affected by the proposed action and are evaluated in detail in this environmental assessment:

**Soils and Geology** – The excavation for the proposed pond will have implications for these resources. Additionally, there is a potential for soil disturbance from construction activities.

**Water Quality** – The increase in impervious surfaces to provide visitor and parking facilities may potentially impact the unnamed tributary to Uphapee Creek.

**Floodplains** – Proposed actions are located in floodplains. Proposed actions include landscape activities and stormwater management strategies.

**Air Quality** – During the short-term construction phase of the project, the operation of construction equipment would generate some criteria pollutant emissions, including carbon monoxide and particulate matter. There is a potential for impacts to air quality due to a projected increase in vehicular traffic to and from the site.

**Vegetation and Wildlife** – Vegetation/wildlife habitat at the site may be removed or rehabilitated to its historic landscape.

**Wetlands** – Proposed actions are located in the vicinity of identified wetland areas. Proposed actions include landscape activities and stormwater management strategies.

**Ecologically Critical Areas** – An unnamed tributary at TUAJ drains into a segment of Uphapee Creek that has been designated as Critical Habitat for three federally listed mussel species by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

**Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species** – Protected species may occur in the area of TUAJ. This environmental document will serve as the basis for appropriate consultation with the agencies charged with protecting listed species.

**Socioeconomics** (demographics, economy, land use, environmental justice, recreation, and aesthetic resources) – The improvements to the site may affect the local economy by potentially stimulating regional growth in housing, employment, and tourist-related services.

**Noise** – The construction phase of this project is expected to create minor and temporary noise impacts at the site. A potential increase in noise is expected due to projected increase in vehicular traffic to the site.

**Energy Requirements and Conservation** – Minor increases in energy consumption would occur to operate the proposed museum and interpretive centers, and any NPS administrative facilities.

**Cultural, Historic, and Archaeological Resources** – The project is focused on the rehabilitation and preservation of the site, which is a nationally significant historic site listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Continued deterioration of the site would endanger its integrity.

**Hazardous Materials** – Past activities performed on the site warrant evaluation of hazardous materials.

**Visitor Experience and Park Operations** – Approximately 495,000 visitors are expected to visit TUAJ annually, based on full build-out, within the initial five years.

#### **1.9.4 Topics Eliminated From Detailed Analysis in the Environmental Assessment**

##### **Unique Natural Resources**

Unique natural resources include park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; floodplains; or ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the National Register of Natural Landmarks. Other than wetlands, floodplains, critical habitat, and the actual TUA I site, which have been retained apart from this section for detailed analysis, there are no additional unique natural resources.

##### **Wild and Scenic Rivers**

There are no designated wild and scenic rivers within the park as defined in the Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) Act (16 U.S.C. 1271-1287). Additionally, no study rivers defined as “designated for potential addition to the national wild and scenic rivers system” by the WSR Act are located in the vicinity of TUA I (NPS 2004a).

The Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) is a listing of more than 3,400 free-flowing river segments in the United States that are believed to possess one or more “outstandingly remarkable” natural or cultural values judged to be of more than local or regional significance by the NPS (NPS 2004b). Under a 1979 Presidential directive and related Council on Environmental Quality Procedures, all federal agencies must seek to avoid or mitigate actions that would adversely affect one or more NRI segments. There are no streams in the NRI in the vicinity of the site.

##### **Prime and Unique Agricultural Lands**

Federal agencies must assess the effects of their actions on soils classified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as prime or unique farmlands in accordance with NEPA (NEPA 45 FR 59189). The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA), authorized by the USDA, designates prime farmland as land with the definitive combination of both the “physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses.” Approximately 30 percent of Macon County is classified as prime farmland (NRCS 2003). Information provided in the Soil Survey of Macon County (NRCS 2003) indicates that there are three soil map units in the

vicinity of TUIAI that meet the requirements for prime farmland: Compass (CmB) loamy sand (0.7 percent of soil in Macon County), Eunola (EuA) fine sandy loam (2.1 percent), and Marvyn (MnB) loamy sand (5.4 percent). Because TUIAI is not currently farmland and the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses is not occurring at TUIAI, the FPPA is not applicable.

### **Natural or Depletable Resources**

Natural or depletable resources include resources such as oil, gas, coal, minerals, and water. No depletable resources that may occur at TUIAI will be used.

### **Public Health and Safety**

NPS has a continuing concern about the health and safety of its employees and others who spend time in the parks, whether as visitors, volunteers, contractors, concession employees, or in any other capacity. Those who participate in work or recreation activities in the parks are always, to some degree, exposed to the risk of accident, injury, or illness. In recognizing this, NPS is committed to reducing these risks. As a part of the planning process for TUIAI, NPS had the historic site investigated and evaluated for potential environmental hazards remaining from its years of activity as an air base and veterinary research facility for Tuskegee University. The environmental hazards at TUIAI were identified, and were either removed or contained onsite. Details on the environmental hazards at TUIAI are discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.5).

The park currently complies with the established guidelines in the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4151 et seq.) and, as appropriate, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336, 104 Stat. 327) to be accessible to disabled visitors.

Additionally, the existing structures at TUIAI were stabilized and are closed to the public; therefore, no potential injury to visitors and park staff from falling debris or structural collapse caused by the deteriorating condition of the site is anticipated.

### **Land Use Plans, Policies, or Controls**

The city of Tuskegee has a *Tuskegee 2010 Comprehensive Plan* [South Central Alabama Development Commission (SCADC) 2000]. The plan includes land use, environmental setting, population and economic analysis, community facilities, circulation, housing, and community enrichment. The proposed action would not conflict with the *Tuskegee 2010 Comprehensive Plan*.

Additional land would not be acquired for the rehabilitation of the site; thus, only the existing area designated as a National Historic Site would be directly affected by the proposed action.

The FAA recently approved an Airport Improvement Plan grant for \$100,000 for Moton Field Municipal Airport in 2003 to fund the installation of navigational aids (GPS instruments), environmental studies, and an update to the Airport Master Plan Study (FAA 2003). The proposed action would not conflict with any FAA airport policies or plans.

In January 2004, the U.S. Forest Service issued a *Revised Land and Resource Management Plan* for Alabama's national forests, including the Tuskegee National Forest. Improvements at TUAJ would be consistent with the *Revised Land and Resource Management Plan*.

### **Indian Sacred Sites and Indian Trust Resources**

Federal agencies must assess the effects of their actions on known Indian sacred sites or Indian Trust Resources. TUAJ has not been identified as a sacred site by any federally recognized Indian tribe or appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian Tribe, and is not considered an Indian Trust Resource. Letters requesting consultation were sent to Indian tribes, including the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Miccosukee Tribe, Catawba Indian Nation, Caddo Nation, Chickasaw Nation, and the Chitimacha Tribe. A sample letter from NPS requesting consultation and responses received from the Indian tribes are included in Appendix C.

### **1.9.5 Impact Measurement**

A thorough description of the methodologies used to assess impacts is presented in Chapter 4. A brief summary is provided here. Impact assessment was based upon the directives of the *DO #12 Handbook* [sec. 4.5(g)]. National Park Service system units are directed to assess the extent of impacts on park resources as defined by the context, duration, and intensity of the effect.

To determine impacts for specific impact topics, methodologies were identified to measure the change in park resources that would occur with the implementation of the preferred alternative. Thresholds were established for each impact topic to help understand the severity and magnitude of changes in resource conditions, both adverse and beneficial, of the various management alternatives.

Potential impacts are described in terms of type (Are the effects beneficial or adverse?), context (Are the effects site-specific, local, or even regional?), duration (Are the effects short-term, lasting less than one year, or long-term, lasting more than one year?), and intensity (Are the effects negligible, minor, moderate, or major?). Because definitions of intensity (negligible, minor, moderate, or major) vary by impact topic, intensity definitions are provided separately for each impact topic analyzed in this document.

## **1.10 REQUIRED PERMITS FOR PREFERRED ACTION**

The following environmental permits are required in association with the preferred action alternative.

### **1.10.1 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit**

Federal and state regulations regarding discharges of stormwater require operators/owners to apply for and obtain National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit coverage prior to conducting regulated construction disturbance activities [Alabama Department of Environmental Management (DEM) 2004a]. These rules require a Construction Best Management Practices Plan (CBMPP) that is designed to minimize pollutant discharges in stormwater runoff to the maximum extent practicable during land disturbance activities. The plan must be prepared by a qualified credentialed professional (QCP), fully implemented and effectively maintained. The CBMPP will be prepared using standards from the *Alabama Handbook for Erosion Control, Sediment Control and Stormwater Management on Construction Sites and Urban Areas*, Volumes 1 and 2 [Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee (SWCC) 2003].

### **1.10.2 Stormwater Permit**

The construction activities proposed for the site total more than 1 acre in size and, therefore, a stormwater permit is required. The following permits are required:

1. Permit 498 – NPDES Construction, Noncoal/Nonmetallic Mining and Dry Procession Less than Five Acres, Other Land Disturbance Activities Application Form, Notice of Registration);
2. Permit 499 – NPDES Construction, Noncoal Mining, Less than Five Acres Stormwater Registration Termination Request and Certification Form);



3. Permit 500 – NPDES Construction, and Noncoal Mining Less than Five Acres Stormwater Inspection Report and BMP Certification Form); and, if applicable,
4. Permit 501 – NPDES Construction, and Noncoal Mining Less than Five Acres Stormwater Noncompliance Notification Report Form are required to be submitted.

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## **CHAPTER 2.0 ALTERNATIVES**

### **2.1 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES**

#### **2.1.1 No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative does not include the rehabilitation or preservation of the Historic Core Area (HCA) at TUAL. The current visitor services include a temporary visitor center (housed within a trailer), a single parking lot, a 30-seat auditorium, restrooms and a small bookstore. Visitors are able to view the HCA from the hilltop; however, there is currently no access to the HCA. No programs interpreting the HCA are provided, outside of the interpretive displays in the visitor center. Existing buildings within the HCA would continue to deteriorate. Lands around the visitor center would continue to be maintained (mowed). The site would continue to function as a NPS unit but no further development would be undertaken.

#### **2.1.2 Preferred Alternative**

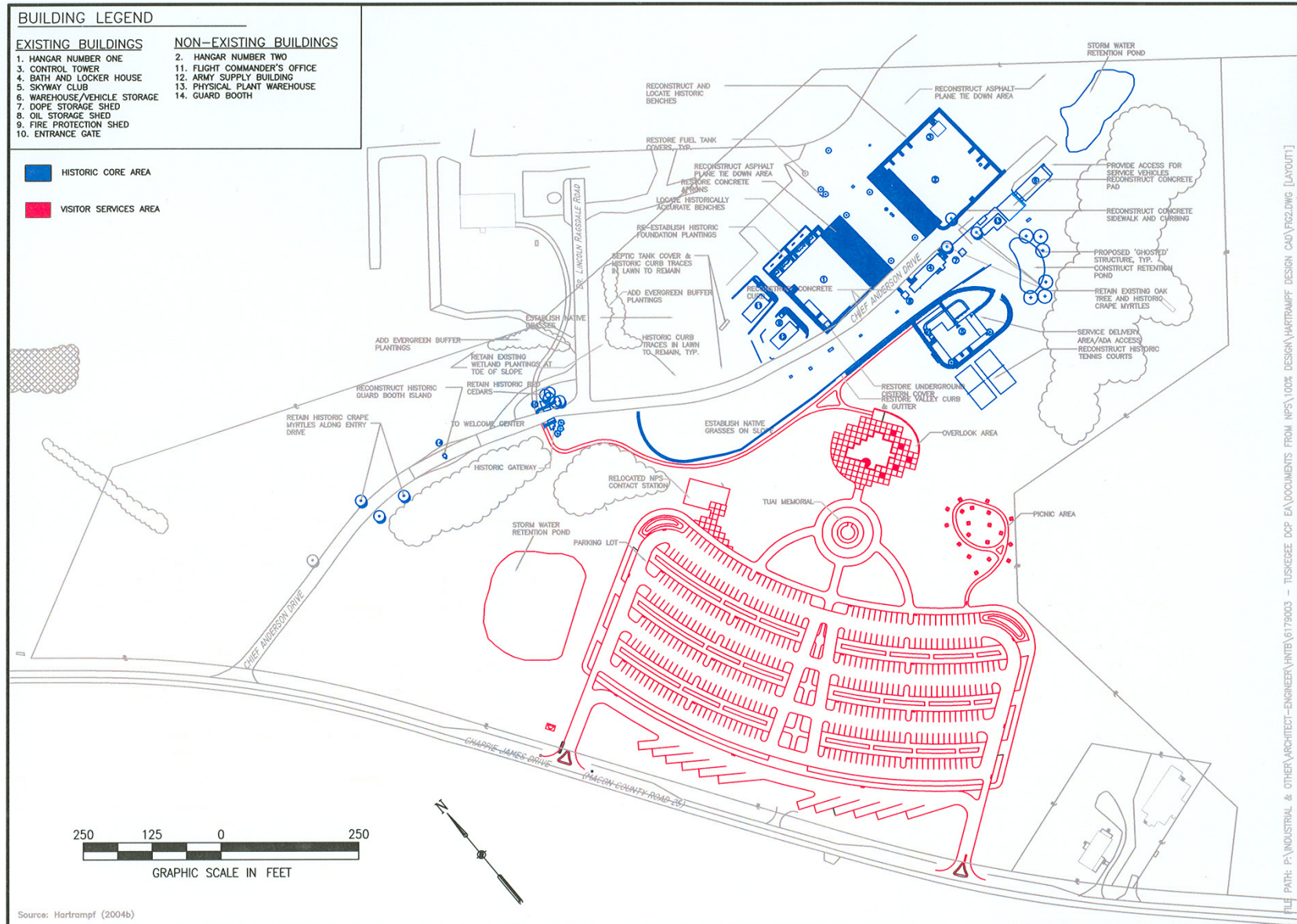
The Preferred Alternative would be designed to provide park visitors a strong “stepping back into time” experience with a focus on the flight training experience during the war years. The proposed improvements to the site would reflect the historic appearance of the site during the year 1945 and the park would provide visitor services compatible with the projected visitor load and composition. All of the proposed actions would occur on the 44-acre parcel owned by NPS including the HCA. Visitation is expected to increase from the current 30,000 people per year to levels projected at 495,000 visitors annually based on full build-out of the site including the future Tuskegee Airmen National Center (TANC), which is not part of the Preferred Alternative evaluated in this environmental assessment. Features that would be included in the Preferred Alternative are depicted in Figures 2-1 and 2-2.

#### ***Visitor Services Area Development***

Construction improvements in the proposed Visitor Services Area adjacent to Chappie James Drive would include relocating the trailer that is currently used as the visitor center for use as a contact station. The existing parking facilities would be expanded. The proposed parking area would have one ingress and one egress point and approximately 350 car and 12 bus parking spaces at full build-out. During the first phase of construction, approximately 150 car spaces and 4 bus parking spaces would be built. An Overlook Area would be provided to view the HCA from the hilltop near the main parking area, with a memorial to the Tuskegee Airmen

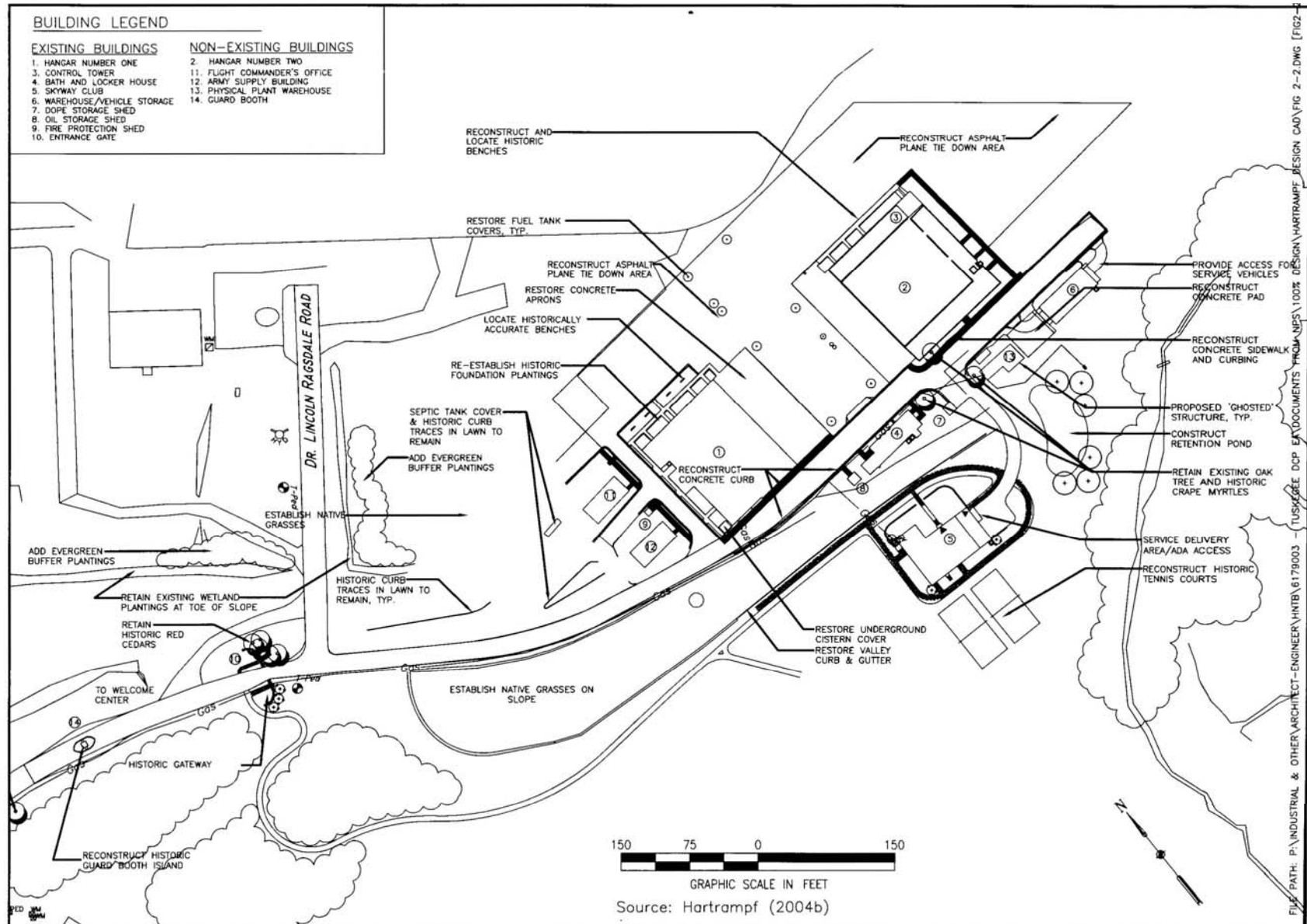
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**FIGURE 2-1: Preferred Alternative**



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**FIGURE 2-2: Preferred Alternative for Historic Core Area**





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close to the Overlook Area, as well as wayside graphic panels and exhibits dispersed throughout the Visitor Services Area. A picnic area and pedestrian circulation paths connecting the HCA and the Visitor Services Area would be constructed (Figure 2-1).

### ***Historic Core Area Development***

The rehabilitation of the HCA would provide visitors with an opportunity to experience the site as it was when the Tuskegee Airmen were training for World War II. Improvements to the HCA would include the rehabilitation, restoration, or reconstruction of 15 buildings or structures in the HCA. Most of the existing historic structures would be restored to their historic appearance on the exterior only, with the interior rehabilitated for modern use.

The following is a brief summary of the proposed use and treatment of each of the 15 historic structures for the Preferred Alternative (Hartrampf 2004b). Refer to Figure 2-2 for the corresponding location of each building by the numbering listed below.<sup>1</sup>

1. **Hangar No. 1:** This hangar would be preserved and rehabilitated to be used for interactive exhibits in the main hangar area and the repair shop area. Public toilets would be provided in this space.
2. **Hangar No. 2:** This hangar is non-extant and would be reconstructed to replicate the original building on the exterior. The interior construction would use modern materials to replicate the original room configuration within the building footprint. The main hangar area would house the future NPS Visitor Center, public toilets and exhibits. The Tuskegee University's Department of Aviation Science may temporarily use perimeter rooms for classrooms.
3. **Control Tower:** This structure would be rehabilitated on the interior and restored on the exterior. The historic stairs would provide limited access to the observation deck. The observation deck and the remainder of the building would house non-interactive displays.
4. **Bath and Locker House:** This structure would be used for NPS administrative offices and a staff break room. The building would not be open to the public.
5. **Skyway Club:** This structure would be restored on the exterior and the former bar area and main social area would be recreated for public use. Facilities for a concessionaire and public toilets would be provided in this building.
6. **Warehouse/Vehicle Storage Building:** This structure would be used for equipment maintenance needs and storage. The building would not be open to the public.

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<sup>1</sup> All extant buildings and the former location of non-extant buildings are identified in Figure 2-2, except for the Vehicle Maintenance Shed (#15), as its exact historic location is uncertain.

7. **Dope Storage Shed:** This structure would be restored on the exterior to its historic appearance. The interior of the building may be used for housing modern systems equipment for the site if required. The building would not be open to the public.
8. **Oil Storage Shed:** This structure would be restored on the exterior to its historic appearance. The interior of the building may be used for housing modern systems equipment for the site if required. The building would not be open to the public.
9. **Fire Protection Shed:** This structure would be restored on the exterior to its historic appearance. The interior of the building may be used for housing modern systems equipment for the site if required. The building would not be open to the public.
10. **Entrance Gate:** The gate would be restored and the sculpture of Robert Moton that is now missing would be re-instated in its original niche if found. If not, a replica would be placed on the gate.
11. **Flight Commander's Office:** This building is non-extant and would be constructed as a ghost structure, which includes a skeletal frame that would represent the original outline and footprint.
12. **Army Supply Building:** This building is non-extant and would be constructed as a ghost structure, which is a skeletal frame representing the original outline and footprint.
13. **Physical Plant Warehouse:** This building is non-extant and would be constructed as a ghost structure, which is a skeletal frame representing the original outline and footprint.
14. **Guard Booth:** This building is non-extant and would be constructed as a ghost structure, which is a skeletal frame representing the original outline and footprint.
15. **Vehicle Maintenance Shed:** This building is non-extant and the former location and dimensions of the building are uncertain. The proposed park plans originally included building a ghost structure of this building; however, insufficient information on the appearance and location of the building to be interpreted caused the plans for a ghost structure to be removed. The building would be interpreted through wayside exhibits until further information can be gathered on its appearance and location.

Other site improvements to the HCA (based on historic documentation) would include landscaping, new sidewalks and trails, resurfaced roads and plane tie-down areas, pond reconstruction, tennis court reconstruction, benches, lighting, windsocks, flags, and other historic elements. Improvements to the drainage, mechanical, and electrical systems, as well as installing a fire suppression system in the HCA are all part of the Preferred Alternative design (Hartrampf 2004b). To rehabilitate the landscape to that period of significance, vegetation would be cleared and replanted.

## 2.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT DISMISSED

### 2.2.1 Alternative C – Options 1 to 4

Four options of Alternative C were explored and presented in the *Conceptual Design* (Hartrampf 2003); however, all four options were eliminated from further consideration during the *Value Analysis Study* based on factors such as impacts to natural and cultural resources, the functional needs of the park (i.e., visitor services, efficiency of park operations), public safety and health, costs, and the legislative mandates, which restricted several components of the proposed action. The *Value Analysis Study* presents the Preferred Alternative, which is a composition of the best elements from the four original options. An explanation of the decision-making process is also included (Hartrampf 2004a).

All four options contained similar features with slight variations on the patterns of vehicular and pedestrian circulation, types of visitor facilities/services, number and location of parking lots, number and location of picnic areas, location of the plaza area, locations of points of access, and the methods used to display information on panels and exhibits. Table 2-1 summarizes the features considered for each of the four options.

**Table 2-1: Summary of the Four Options for Alternative C**

<b>Features Considered</b>	<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Option 3</b>	<b>Option 4</b>
<b>Parking</b>	2 lots	2 lots	1 lot	1 car lot, 1 bus lot
<b>NPS Facility Type</b>	Pavilion/Shelter	2 Shelter/Visitor Contact Facilities	Visitor Orientation Shelter	Visitor Orientation Shelter
<b>Access Points</b>	2 for visitors, 2 for shuttle (via Chappie James Drive)	3 for visitors (via Chappie James Drive), shuttles access from Chief Anderson Drive	2 for visitors (via Chappie James Drive), shuttles access from Chief Anderson Drive	2 (via Chief Anderson Drive & Chappie James Drive)
<b>Plaza Location</b>	Next to pavilion/shelter	Between 2 NPS Facilities	Next to shelter	Next to shelter
<b>Memorial</b>	Between NPS facility & overlook	Combined w/ plaza	Information nodes along pathway b/w plaza & overlook	Combined with overlook
<b>Scenic Overlook</b>	Info panels/exhibits; access to HCA	Info panels/exhibits; access to HCA	Info panels/exhibits; access to HCA	Info panels/exhibits; access to HCA
<b>Picnic Area</b>	2 near overlook	1 near overlook	1 near overlook	1 near parking area
<b>Walk/Shuttle</b>	Walk (1 pathway) &/or shuttle	Walk (2 pathways) &/or shuttle	Walk (2 pathways) &/or shuttle	Walk only (2 pathways)

The following elements are common to Options 1 through 4:

- The NPS Shelters/Orientation Facilities would contain similar features that include restrooms, a contact area, an audio/video presentation area, concession areas/gift shops, a waiting area or shelter for shuttle pick-up;
- A type of memorial or memorial plaza with information displayed on panels/exhibits;
- The scenic overlook is in the same location and would contain similar features in all options;
- Pedestrian circulation paths are included in all options; and
- Creation of green space in the HCA and the rehabilitation of the current vegetation at TUIAI would be included.

### **2.2.2 Visitor Circulation**

As a component of all four options described above, visitor circulation within the HCA was considered, for which three alternatives were explored in the Conceptual Design (Hartrampf 2003):

1. Complete self-guided tour of the HCA on foot; vehicular access to HCA only by handicapped.
2. Fully guided tour with a shuttle bus system to HCA.
3. Semi-guided tour with access on foot or by shuttle.

The visitor circulation option for an in-park transportation system (shuttle) was dismissed for this phase of park development due to budgetary constraints (Hartrampf 2004a). Access on foot along pedestrian pathways will still be included in the Preferred Alternative.

## **2.3 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Table 2-2 summarizes the direct and indirect impacts to the resources at TUIAI for the Preferred Alternative versus the No Action Alternative.

**Table 2-2: Summary of Direct and Indirect Impacts for Alternatives Considered**

<b>FACTOR</b>	<b>PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE</b>	<b>NO ACTION</b>
<b>SOILS AND GEOLOGY</b>	Temporary impacts from soil disturbance during construction; excavation of historic pond would create permanent impacts.	No impact.
<b>WATER QUALITY</b>	Potential temporary impacts during	No impact.

FACTOR	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE	NO ACTION
	construction; vegetation removal may cause temporary erosion. Increase in stormwater runoff from an increase in impervious surface and vegetation modifications. These potential impacts will be avoided through use of BMPs.	
FLOODPLAINS	Impact to floodplains from vegetation removal, reconstruction of historic features, and storm water ponds.	No impact.
AIR QUALITY	Temporary impacts during construction; increase in emissions from projected traffic.	No impact.
VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE	Direct impacts to vegetation and wildlife from removal of native and invasive species; native plant species will be planted; increase in vegetation trampling from visitors.	Invasive species and overgrown plantings would continue to grow at the site and removed on an as-needed basis according to funding and subject to <i>Management Policies</i> .
WETLANDS	No impact.	No impact.
ECOLOGICALLY CRITICAL AREAS	No impact.	No impact.
RARE, THREATENED, AND ENDANGERED SPECIES	No impact.	No impact.
SOCIOECONOMICS (demographics, economy, land use, environmental justice, recreation, and aesthetic resources)	Direct and indirect beneficial impacts from creation of new jobs, educational and recreational opportunities; additional tourist dollars would be added to the local economy.	No economic stimulus to the region.
NOISE	Temporary impacts during construction; increase in noise from projected vehicular increase.	No impact.
ENERGY REQUIREMENTS AND CONSERVATION	No impact. Minor increase in energy use.	No impact.
CULTURAL, HISTORIC, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES	Beneficial impacts from restoration and rehabilitation of historic features to return the site to circa 1945 conditions.	No protection for the cultural resources; resources will deteriorate.
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	No impact.	No impact.
VISITOR EXPERIENCE AND PARK OPERATIONS	Impacts from increase in visitor use and park operations.	No impact.

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